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## Senate Unit Says SALT Enhances Arms Monitoring

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The Senate Intelligence Committee said yesterday that the SALT II treaty enhances the ability of the United States to monitor the Soviet strategic weapons programs controlled by the treaty, and that rejection of SALT II would make monitoring Soviet programs more difficult.

In an ambiguously worded, unclassified report on its two-year investigation of America's ability to monitor Soviet compliance with SALT, the committee said some aspects of the treaty could be monitored with high confidence, but some others "can be monitored with only a low level of confidence."

The committee's statement did not assess the military significance of these low-confidence areas. Nor did the statement reach an overall conclusion on whether SALT II is "adequately verifiable," as the Carter administration has claimed.

However, the committee report paralleled the administration's position on SALT verification. The administration has said previously that some aspects of the treaty would be difficult to monitor. The administration adds that, on balance, the treaty is adequately verifiable because the Soviets could not gain a military advantage by cheating on it without U.S. knowledge. The intelligence committee did not address this last assertion.

After the report was issued yesterday, Defense Secretary Harold Brown said he was "very pleased that the report supports the administration's view that the treaty is verifiable."

With the publication of this report, Brown said, "I believe that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will scratch the verification issue off its list of concerns and proceed to mark up and report the SALT treaty to the full Senate..."

Brown specifically welcomed the committee's conclusion that SALT II would improve America's ability to monitor Soviet strategic programs generally. Brown said that without the treaty's prohibition on deliberate concealment measures by both sides the Soviets might be able to hide a great deal from the United States.

SALT critics interpreted the Intelligence Committee report differently. One who is a member of the committee, Sen. Jake Garn (R-Utah), noted that the committee avoided the question of whether the treaty can be monitored adequately, and "leaves it to each senator to conclude for himself whether existing and projected levels of uncertainty represent unacceptable risks." Garn indicated that he thought the risks were unacceptable.

Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), a member of the Intelligence Committee, said that in his opinion the treaty is not adequately verifiable. A reporter asked Jackson if he thought the verification issue alone is serious enough to justify rejecting the treaty, provided its other provisions are acceptable.

This is a hypothetical question for Jackson, because he says he thinks the treaty is unacceptable for other reasons. But he replied to it by saying, "If it was a good agreement... I would be willing to take some chances" on the monitoring issue.

Supporters of SALT in the Senate said yesterday that the Intelligence Committee's findings would be a boost for the treaty, because the committee did not suggest that the uncertainties it found regarding U.S. ability to monitor SALT II posed a direct danger to American security.

On the contrary, these SALT supporters said, the committee found that SALT would improve American ability to know what the Soviets are up to.

The intelligence committee had not planned to release any public statement on SALT monitoring until after its chairman, Birch Bayh (D-Ind.), and ranking minority member Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) had testified on the matter to a closed session of the Foreign Relations Committee. That testimony is scheduled for Wednesday.

However, an article in Thursday's

Washington Post saying that the Intelligence Committee would report that the SALT treaty's provisions could be verified provoked an urgent, sometimes emotional meeting of the Intelligence Committee Thursday.

The Post cited informed sources as the basis for its Thursday report. These sources told The Post that the finding that SALT could be verified would come in Bayh's and Goldwater's testimony Wednesday.

(Goldwater stated his views publicly Aug. 2, saying on the Senate floor that "We can do an acceptable job [of verification] with the certain knowledge that we can improve this as time goes on.")

At Thursday's special meeting of the Intelligence Committee, some members charged that the White House had leaked the story to The Post and deliberately sought to exaggerate the positive aspects of the committee's findings. (In fact, the Post's sources for the original story were on Capitol Hill.)

Jackson urged the Intelligence Committee to issue a news release Thursday saying The Post story was false and misleading, informed sources said. But other senators said this would create the impression that the Intelligence Committee had concluded that SALT II is unverifiable.

In the often-heated discussion that followed, these sources said, the committee decided to resolve the matter by issuing its findings yesterday, ahead of schedule.

Senate sources said the Intelligence Committee could have approved a stronger statement endorsing America's overall ability to monitor the SALT treaty if it had allowed for majority and minority views. A minority of three to six of the 13 committee members probably would not have endorsed a stronger report, these sources said.

However, the committee preferred to produce a report that all its members could sign, which it eventually did.

The report says the United States can have high confidence in its ability to monitor the numerical limits in the SALT treaty that restrict both superpowers to fixed numbers of land-based missiles, submarine-based missiles, missiles with multiple warheads and so forth.

SALT II's qualitative restraints on strategic arms will be more difficult to monitor, the committee says, though without giving specific details.

The most important qualitative controls limit each country to deploying